

**“AS” AND “SO”
NO. 3173**

**A SERMON
PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1909
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON
ON LORD’S-DAY EVENING, AUGUST 3, 1873**

*“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”
Colossians 2:6*

[Two other sermons by Mr. Spurgeon upon the same text are sermons #483, life and Walk of Faith and #3030, A Consistent Walk for Time to Come]

THIS is a very simple text, yet no human being has ever discovered its full meaning. It is a great deep—happy are they who know how to dive into its depths and to swim at ease in its lengths and breadths. Blessed are they who continually obey the exhortation which it contains, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”

The text divides itself into faith and practice. “You have received Christ Jesus the Lord,” there is your faith. “Walk ye in him,” that is to be your daily practice. The text also contains a model for that practice in the “as” and the “so” which are its cardinal points. “As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” What we have done suggests the way in which we are to do what still lies before us. “As ye have received...so walk.”

I. Notice in the text, first, THE FACT STATED. “Ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord.”

Whatever else you have done or have not done, *you have received Christ*. The act of faith was the putting out of your empty hand to receive all the fullness of the Godhead in receiving Christ. There are some precious experiences to which you have not yet attained, some lofty heights to which you have not yet climbed, but you “have received Christ Jesus the Lord.”

That is the distinguishing mark of all true Christians. Though you may not all belong to the same denomination, yet without a single exception this is true concerning you, whether you are old or young, whether you are well-instructed or ill-taught, whether you are full of faith or are troubled with many a doubt and many a fear, you “have received Christ Jesus the Lord.”

There is nothing in this fact to cause you one boastful thought. You have *received*, that is what emptiness does in order that it may be filled, that is what hunger does in order that its cravings may be satisfied, that is what the beggar in the street does when he craves and obtains alms. There is nothing whereof you can glory in the fact that you have received, for I may further remind you that even your very receiving you have received. The faith by which you received Christ was as much the gift of God to you as was the Christ upon whom your faith was fixed.

You know that it is so and therefore you also know that boasting is forever excluded from the fact that you are saved. You have received Christ Jesus, that is all. I hope you prize the Gift, and praise the Giver. I trust that you often cry, with the apostle Paul, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift,” and that your soul makes her boast in the Lord concerning the Savior whom you have received, but no other boasting is permissible even for a moment.

I remind you once more, beloved, that, *you have received CHRIST*. It is true that you have received His doctrines and that you still believe them. It is true that you have received His precepts and that you have obeyed them, though, alas! your obedience has been far from perfect. It is true that you have received His ordinances and that you have conformed to them by being baptized on profession of your

faith in Him—and by sitting down with your fellow believers at His table. But after all, the main point is that you have received Jesus Christ, Himself.

Every word that He has spoken is sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, but sweeter far are the lips with which He uttered those words. Every command of His is to be esteemed more highly than the finest of fine gold, but as for the King who gave those commands, “He is altogether lovely.” Human language cannot describe Him and yet *you have received Him*—His very self—you have received Him into your hearts, to dwell there as your only Lord and Master.

You have received Him as your life, for you live through Him. And you receive Him day by day as the Bread of life upon which your soul feeds, and as the Water of life which quenches the thirst of your soul. You have not merely received His offices, His gifts, His grace, His promises, but you have received Him. He is the center of your confidence, the target of your hopes.

The text says that you have received “Christ Jesus the Lord.” Here are three out of His many names, and first, beloved, you have received Him as *Christ*, the Anointed of God. You see in Him no amateur Savior, uncommissioned—but one sent by the Father, the authorized Representative of the Most High—the Christos, the Messiah, the Sent One, who could rightly apply to Himself the ancient promise, “The Spirit of the LORD is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the LORD.”

Christ came to this world because the Father sent Him. He said to the Jews, “I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” He lived and died here because it pleased the Father for Him to do so, and He is still appointed by the Father to distribute unnumbered gifts to His people. “It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.”

You believe that upon Christ the Spirit rests without measure, that He is anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows, and in receiving Him as the Anointed One, you also have an unction from the Holy One, and therefore you also are anointed to be kings and priests unto God. So you have received Him as Christ, the Anointed.

But you have also received Him as *Jesus*, and you love that charming name. No hymn more truly expresses your feelings than that one by John Newton which begins,

*“How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer’s ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.”*

You also sing with Bernard of Clairvaux—

*“Jesus, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills my breast;
But sweeter far Thy face to see,
And in Thy presence rest.*

*“Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find,
A sweeter sound than Thy blest name,
O Savior of mankind!”*

You received Him as your Savior and therefore He has saved you from the penalty of sin, and He will also save you from the dominion and power of sin. If you are saved, you are saved entirely through Jesus—and you do not need, and you do not desire any other Savior. You look to Jesus for all that can

be comprehended in the word salvation. His name means Savior and you have found Him to be a Savior to you. So you have received the anointed Savior, Christ Jesus.

And you have received Him as *the Lord*. You have not accepted Him as merely one of many anointed prophets, nor as a man sent from God, as John the Baptist was, but you worship Him as the Lord. And oh, how blessed it is to adore the Son of God! We cannot make any terms of peace with those who deny the deity of Christ, nor ought they to want to be at peace with us, for if Christ is not the Son of God, we are idolaters. And if He is, they are not Christians. There is a great gulf between us and them, and we do not hesitate for a moment to say on which side of that gulf we stand.

That same Jesus who was nailed to the tree is to us both Lord and Christ. By faith, we put our finger into the print of the nails and our hand into His pierced side—and never questioning the fact that He is truly man, we rejoice to say to Him, as Thomas did, “My Lord and my God.” Jesus Christ is indeed to us “very God of very God.” This being so, we have received Him as our Lord to rule and govern us. In spiritual matters He is our only King—we own no master save Him who is *The Master*, of whom Martha said to her sister Mary, “The Master is come, and calleth for thee.”

No teacher has any right to impart to us any instruction except that which he has received from the only infallible Teacher. “He is the head of the body, the church,” and we recognize no other headship. We joyfully acknowledge that He is our sovereign Lord in the spiritual realm. He is the absolute Monarch of our soul. He is that perfect Husband who is the true Head of His mystical body, the church. Oh, that we more fully carried out, practically, in every thought, and wish, and action of our entire life, all that is implied in receiving Jesus Christ as Lord!

Beloved friends, as I look round upon you all and gaze into your faces, this question rushes from my heart to my lips—Have all of you received Christ Jesus the Lord? Alas! I am sorrowfully persuaded that there are some of you who have not received Him. He has knocked again and again, with that pierced hand of His, at the door of your heart, but you have not let Him in. This fountain of the Water of life has flowed close to your feet, yet you have not drunk of it. Christ has been set before you as the Bread of life sent down from heaven, but you have not eaten of Him—you have refused Him even until now.

“Nay,” say you, “you are too severe in charging us with having refused Christ, for we have not done that.” Well, it seems to me that this is just what you have done, but I will put it more softly, and say that, at any rate, you have not received Him. You have put Him off to a more convenient season, which will probably never come to you.

O poor souls, poor souls, how sad is your state in not having received Christ Jesus the Lord! Leaving out heaven and eternity for the moment—and speaking only of today—how wretched you must be in not having received Christ! When I see a man who has never seen the sun, I pity him, but not as I pity you who have never seen the Sun of righteousness.

If I heard of a child who had never known a father’s love and who had never looked up with affection into a mother’s face, I should pity that poor orphan, but not as much as I pity you who are living without a Savior. If I knew a man who had never known what health was, but who, from the day of his birth, was always sickly and bowed down with pain and infirmity, I should pity him, but not as I pity you who are sick unto death, yet who will not accept healing from the great Physician.

May God look down upon you, now, not only with pity, as He always does, but also in the power of His almighty grace and turn the heart of stone to flesh and lead you to receive Christ Jesus as Lord! That is all you have to do—to receive Jesus as the parched earth receives the refreshing showers, and as the wilted lilies receive the reviving rain drops, and lift up their drooping heads again. That is all you have to do—to receive Jesus.

A child can receive. The feeblest can receive. Ay, one lying at the point of death, the sick man dying of fever may receive the cooling draught that is put to his lips. This is all that is asked of you—that you will receive Christ Jesus the Lord. Oh, that you would all receive Him now! God grant that it may be so and He shall have the praise.

II. Now, secondly, notice THE COUNSEL GIVEN, “so walk ye in him.” The text not only reminds us of what we have done, but it also tells us what we are now to do.

Brethren and sisters in Christ, it is not easy to decide whether this counsel is to be regarded as a permission or as a precept, “so walk ye in him.” Taking them either way, the words are a sweet morsel in my mouth. Yet I think I prefer to regard them as a permission.

Suppose I had been to Jesus as a poor sinner and that He had saved me, and that He had then said to me, “There, you are saved, so go your way. You have been a prodigal, but you are forgiven. You have shoes on your feet, a ring on your finger, and the best robe to cover your nakedness—now go and do what you can for yourself.”

Well, it would have been infinite mercy that would have welcomed me and pardoned me, but how much more gracious and tender is the Lord’s message, “Come, my child, take up your abode with Me and wander away no more.” It is thus that God speaks to all who have believed in Jesus, “You have received Jesus Christ the Lord, so now you may walk in him and you may always walk in him. What He was to you at the first, He may be to you still, and He may be to you forever and ever. Did you at the first eat Him as the Bread of life to your soul? Then go on still eating Him. Did you spiritually drink of Him as the Water of life? Then still drink of Him. He is yours forever, so continue to draw from His fullness all that you need. As ye have received Him, so keep on receiving Him.” Surely, this is a most gracious permission as well as a very precious precept.

“Walk in him.” Does not this mean, first, look upon Jesus Christ as your Way to heaven and walk in him? Look upon Him as your Forerunner and follow Him. Look upon Him as your Companion and lean upon Him. Look upon Him as your delight and live in Him, abide in Him. The expression, “Walk in him,” implies action and progress. Let your whole life be practically governed by your union with Christ, let your actions speak of your fellowship with Him.

But walking also means progress, so do not stand still in Christ, but go on to know more and more of Him—make advances in the Christian life, “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” There is also something of the idea of permanence in the precept, “Walk ye in him.” It means, go nowhere else, but continue in Him—let your ordinary life and your common conversation indicate your closeness of communion with Him.

“Walk ye in him.” I trust that at least some of us know what it is to “walk in him.” Though we could not tell to others all that it means, yet it is a blessed fact in our experience, and we intend, by God’s grace, to “walk in him” as long as we live. I think this is what walking in Him means—to wake up in the morning and to have our first thoughts full of the Savior—to seek His guidance and blessing in everything that is to happen to us during the day, to go down to our morning meal with our heart’s affection fixed upon Jesus, to go off to the business or the workshop in the full consciousness that He is going with us—when our hands are busy and our mind is occupied with our trading or our working, still realizing that our heart is with our Beloved in the secret place where none can follow us, and so, as the hours run on, through the noon tide heat Christ is our shade and shelter, in the cool of the evening His company is our supreme delight, and then, as we retire to our bed, our last thought being—

*“How sweet to rest
Forever on our Savior’s breast!”*

Christian, this ought to be your way of living. And if you are right with God, this is the way in which you actually do live. You “walk in him.” What a lovely garden! What a delightful place! The air is balmy, the scenery all around is charming. There is nothing to distract, or disturb, or disgust, but everything to delight, and gratify, and satiate the spirit—so “walk in him.” Climb to every lofty hill of His infinite love, explore the deepest recesses of His eternal purposes so far as they are accessible to mortal man. And in this way, “as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.”

III. Notice, thirdly, THE MODEL WHICH IS PRESENTED TO US IN THE TEXT. “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk ye in him.” The two emphatic words are “as,” and “so.” We are to walk in Christ Jesus as we received Him.

There is great safety in going back to first principles. To make sure of being in the right way, it is well to look back to the gate by which we entered the way. You know how, in ordinary life, in the matter of mutual love, we often look back upon the early days of that experience as the sweetest.

Not long ago I heard a good man, whose time had been very fully occupied in business, so that for many a year he had scarcely been able to have a holiday, say that, when at last he did manage to take one with his wife, it was like his honeymoon.

You recollect also how the Lord said to Israel, “I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness.” God likes us to go back in thought to the time when we began with Him—and I want to take you who are Christians back to your first love of God. Perhaps with some of you, religion has become a very mechanical sort of thing—you have become stereotyped in your religious observances. You need to go back to the place where you first received Christ Jesus the Lord and there refurbish your faith, and love, and all your other graces.

So I ask you, how did you receive Christ? Possibly your first answer is, “*I received Him in the depth of sorrow and humiliation of soul.* I had been broken in pieces by the great plough of the law, and was rent and torn asunder by my own consciousness of guilt. I lay before the cross, moaning and roaring like a wounded beast, and in my extremity I received Christ as being the very Savior that I needed.

I felt myself to be less than nothing and I took Him to be my All in all. Shivering in my nakedness through sin, I took His righteousness as my perfect covering. Famished to death, I took Him to be both my life and the food of that life. I grasped Christ in my despair at finding there was nothing else to which I could cling. Out of the great deeps of my soul’s distress, I cast myself upon His mercy, saying,

*“I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away, I know
I must forever die.”*

Our daily walk in Christ must be very much like that. Not exactly so, for there should be no unbelief in it. As for myself, I must confess that I never realize Christ’s preciousness so much as when I feel myself still to be apart from Him, an undeserving, ill-deserving, hell-deserving sinner. Sometimes when our Lord gives us sweet enjoyments, we make too much of them by letting them come between Himself and our souls. And when the Holy Spirit bestows upon us certain graces, we think we are very fine fellows and carry our heads aloft very proudly—instead of giving all the glory to His holy name.

Now, if we ever act like that, we may rest assured that as we go up in our own estimation, Christ will go down—and that would be a sorry thing indeed. Grow in grace, but not in self-esteem. Have more faith, but do not boast of having it. Be full of zeal, but not of conceit concerning it. Be as holy as it is possible for you to become, but do not prate and brag about your holiness as some have done.

Be not like those who push with horn and with shoulder the weak ones of the flock because they have not attained to such heights as these strong ones profess to have reached—though, possibly, the feebler and humbler ones are really nearer to God than the boasters are. Lie low, brother, lie low, sister. For what the old Essex farmer used to tell me is true, “If you are one inch above the ground, you are just that inch too high.”

So lie low and thus continue to walk in Christ—yourself being nothing and Christ being everything. You know that, if you get to be something, Christ cannot then be everything to you. But if you are still nothing—and less than nothing in your own estimation—as you sink in self-esteem, your Lord will rise to His right position in your sight and so you will be walking humbly in Him as you ought.

Think again how you received Christ. When you really did lay hold of Him by faith, I am sure that *you received Him with great certainty*. There was no mockery, no sham about your reception of Christ. You were a lost sinner and you were pointed to the only Savior—and you did really and truly look unto Him who said, “Look unto me, and be you saved.”

Whatever else there was in your look, there was intense earnestness in it. There was no pretence or affectation about it, it was very real. Is all your religion as real as that first faith-look at Jesus was? Do you walk in him as truly and as decidedly as you did that first day? My dear brother, do you ever pray sham prayers? My dear sister, do you ever sing sham praises? Is there not a very great risk of our making our religion into a mere shell with no life in it? May God save us from everything that would be such a sham as that and make us as sincere in our walk in Christ as we were in our first reception of Him!

I know that I was most anxious to be certain that I had really believed in Jesus to the saving of my soul. I was not satisfied with just one look at Jesus, but I looked, and looked, again and again, with a holy anxiety lest I might possibly have been mistaken and not really have trusted Christ as my Savior. I wish we had more of that sacred anxiety concerning our walking in Christ.

We were not only very sincere in our early repentance and faith, but *our reception of Christ was very vital*. Salvation was to us a matter of life or death. It was not something about which we were only slightly concerned. It would be well if we manifested a similar vitality about our daily walk in Christ. There are some professors whom I know who do not seem to me to be alive much above their ankles—they have not sufficient vitality to reach up to their knees, so as to make them mighty in prayer. They are alive, I hope, but they remind me very vividly of a remarkable but gruesome picture of the resurrection that I once saw.

There were skeletons coming out of the graves, with the bones only partly covered with flesh. One man had a head without any eyes in it. Another was stretching out an arm that was all bone—and the rest of the figures in the picture were of a similar character. It was a strange conception on the part of the painter, yet I fear it was only too true a representation of the spiritual state of many nominal Christians.

I hope they are really rising from among the dead, but they have not risen yet into fullness of life. Many professors appear to have a very low vitality, if they are alive at all. Their hearts are hard and stony, their consciences insensitive—sin does not shock them as it shocks the young convert. He is startled and alarmed at the very appearance of evil—but they have become so callous that they walk unconcerned, among scenes that ought to break their hearts.

May the Lord save you, beloved brethren and sisters in Christ, from all such callousness as that! May you have the same tender sensitiveness to sin that you had when you received Christ Jesus the Lord. And as you welcomed Him then with a warm, loving, overflowing emotion, so may you walk in him, all your days, as one who is alive from the dead—thoroughly alive—with all your powers and faculties in active exercise and your whole soul brimming over with love to Him!

Did you not also, beloved, *receive Christ very eagerly*? Have you ever helped to feed a man who had long been without food? If so, you know that it is a great treat to see how eagerly he eats. He does not pick over the meat to see if it is well done—it is all well done to him. He does not leave a scrap of food upon the plate and he looks round to see if there is any more that he can beg.

It was in such a fashion that we feasted upon Christ when we first received Him. We had been for months, perhaps even for years, longing with a great heart-ache to find the Savior. And when we did find Him and began to feast upon Him, we thought we never could have enough of Him. Do you recollect how eager you were, in those days, to go where you could hear the Gospel? You went to a place which was so crowded that you could not get a seat, but you did not mind standing in the aisle and you did not feel tired then.

But now you need a nice soft cushion to sit on and a cushion even for your feet—and you are weary long before the sermon is finished. In those early days, you would have walked many miles to hear

about Jesus Christ—and even if the preacher’s language was somewhat rough and uncouth, what cared you for that so long as he faithfully preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified?

That is the way in which we should eagerly walk in Christ still, feeling that we can never have too much of His company, longing to be often where He meets with His people, delighting in His worship, charmed with everything He says and does. We received Christ eagerly, so let us walk in Him with the same eagerness and earnestness.

Many of us also received Christ very resolutely. I know that I asked the question, over and over again, “Shall I go to Him?” And at last, when I was almost driven to despair, I cried, “I must, I will,—

*“I’ll go to Jesus, though my sin
Hath like a mountain rose;
I know His courts, I’ll enter in,
Whatever may oppose.””*

That was how many of us received Christ Jesus the Lord. There were difficulties in our way, but we overcame them, for we were determined to be saved if it was possible. What sacred doggedness, what holy pertinacity will a soul bestow when it is resolved on being saved! Hunger will make a man break through stone walls and iron bars, but a soul that is hungering and thirsting after Christ does not know that there are any walls or bars, so overpowering is its eagerness to get to Him. It was with such eagerness as this that we received Christ Jesus the Lord.

Are we just as eager to walk in him? I know that some of you are sorely tempted—are you standing fast? Are you standing up for Jesus as you used to do when you first knew Him? Are you firm as a rock in your resistance to everything that is opposed to Him and to His truth? You ought to be. Your song should still be that one of which you were so fond in those early days,—

*“Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,
I’ll follow where He goes.””*

A lion-like spirit was in you then. You would gladly have gone to prison for Christ’s sake, or even to death if He had required it. If somebody had told me, when I was converted, that I should have to go to prison and lie there for twelve years, as John Bunyan did, if I became a Christian, I verily believe that I should have leaped for joy at the prospect of so high an honor. To be a martyr for the truth’s sake—the prospect looked glorious—the ruby crown glowed in the sunshine of our ardent anticipation and we envied those who had been privileged to wear it.

It was so then. But beloved, is it so now? Can you cleave to Christ as tenaciously now as you did then? Can you bear to be in ill repute for His sake? Can you rejoice in being scoffed at because you are a Christian as you did when you received Christ Jesus the Lord? If you cannot, blush and be ashamed, and from henceforth, pray that, with the same undaunted courage and determination with which you received Him, you may continue to walk in Him.

I will not weary you by multiplying words, but I must ask whether you do not recollect *how joyfully you received Christ*. Ah, you cannot forget that, for in proportion to your sorrow before, was your joy when you accepted Christ as your Savior. No wonder you sang,—

*“Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away!””*

We are not surprised that Miriam and the women went out with timbrels and with dances when Pharaoh and all his host were drowned in the Red Sea, and we do not marvel at Miriam’s jubilant song, “Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously,” for our soul took a timbrel and our feet danced before the Lord, as we sang unto Him who had triumphed so gloriously for us.

As I go back and remind you of those early joys, I ask you again whether you are as joyous now as you were then? You ought to be a great deal more joyous, for you have had so much more cause to praise the Lord than you had then. Come, brothers and sisters, let us go again to Jesus as we went to Him at the first—let us go as poor, guilty, needy sinners, to Jesus Christ upon the cross, just as though we had never gone before. If we do so, I can tell you what the consequence will be, just as it was at the first. As we—

*“View the flowing
Of our Savior’s precious blood,
With divine assurance knowing
He hath made our peace with God,”—*

we shall feel as though we were young converts once again. We may be getting old and grey, and perhaps cold as well as grey, but we shall become like little children again, and we shall shout, “Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!” as the Son of David rides in triumph down the streets of our soul. Oh, that it may be so with many of us here! It ought to be so, and it will be so, if you walk in Christ Jesus the Lord as you received Him in the hour of your conversion.

I will close my discourse when I have reminded you that, when we received Christ Jesus the Lord, *we received the whole of Him*. We took Him for all that we knew of Him and we found that He was much more than we then thought He was. But we did not pick and choose and say, “We will have His pardon, but we will not have His sanctification.”

We took the many-sided Christ, the Christ of many glorious characters, the Christ of ten thousand times ten thousand beauties. We took Christ to teach us, Christ to lead us, Christ to feed us, Christ to cheer us, Christ for us to obey, and Christ for us to delight in—we took a whole Christ.

And then we gave Him our whole selves. We said, “Lord, take us, body, soul, and spirit.” We prayed that the sacrifice might be bound with cords to the horns of the altar forever. We made no bargains with Him—we gave the freehold of our souls to Jesus—and of our bodies, too, and we only asked that we might not have a pulse beating except for Him, or our lungs heaving except as He was our very life.

And we took Christ—at least I know I did—for better or worse, in health or in sickness, to have and to hold so that even death should never part us. We put our hand in His and asked Him to take us and keep us forever. And we took Him and said, “We will hold to You and will not let You go.” Since then there has been many a tug from Satan, who has tried to drag us away from Christ, or to make us think that Christ was going away from us—but we have managed to hold to Him to this hour.

Perhaps you feel as though you had only got a hold of the hem of His garment. If so, try to get a firmer hold on Him. Grasp Him, hold Him by the feet, throw your arms about Him, and tell Him that, without a smile from Him, your spirit cannot rest. Tell Him that you are sick in love and want His presence, and must have it. And beg Him, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, to come to you.

Say unto Him, “My Lord, if You do love me, come and show Your love. If, indeed, there be between You and me a union of an eternal nature, come to me. Be not a stranger to Your own flesh, but be now as You were of old. Come to me again and let Your left hand be under my head while Your right hand does embrace me.”

Oh, for more of these blessed hungerings and longings! Beloved, we will never let Christ go. We took Him forever and we will hold Him forever. And blessed be His name, He will hold us forever. We are in His hand and none can take us thence. There shall we be when earth and heaven are in a blaze. There shall we be when He shall sit upon His judgment seat. And there shall we be world without end. Amen.

I leave this sermon with God’s people, but I cannot help adding that I do earnestly pray that all of you may receive Christ Jesus the Lord. Oh, come to Him tonight! He is willing that you should have Him—and every soul that wills to have Christ may have Him, for “the Spirit and the bride say, Come.

And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Amen, and Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

1 JOHN 3:10-21

Verses 10-12. *In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.*

Some people try to deceive us with the notion that all men are the children of God, but John, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, shows how false that idea is. Holiness and love distinguish the children of God from the children of the devil.

13. *Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.*

As Cain hated Abel, so worldlings hate the saints, whose holiness is a continual rebuke to the ungodly.

14-16. *We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.* [See sermon #2556, Life proved By Love] *He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us:* [See sermons #2656, The Death of Christ For His People and #2959, God’s Love to the Saints] *and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

Such self-sacrifice as this is the very highest form of love to the brethren and is a following of the example of Christ, who “laid down his life for us.”

17-18. *But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.*

Love that consists only of words is utterly worthless. If it is true love, it must prove itself by kind deeds and gracious actions.

19. *And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.*

The love that will pass this test will bring a restful assurance of peace to the heart.

20-22. *For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.*

It is not everyone who can have whatever he chooses to ask of God in prayer. This privilege is only granted to those who “keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” [See sermon #1103, The Conditions of Power in Prayer]

23. *And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.*

Faith and love—faith in Christ and love to one another—are here most happily joined together. Let us never put them asunder.

24. *And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*

Though this great truth of our dwelling in God and God dwelling in us is a great mystery, it is a mystery concerning which we need not be in doubt if we will learn of the Holy Spirit what He delights to teach us.

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